

The Shampoo King: F. W. Fitch and His Company

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Book Notices

The Ohio Valley: Your Guide to America's Heartland, by George Laycock and Ellen Laycock. (New York: Dolphin Books/Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1983. pp. 388, illustrations, appendixes, index, \$10.95 paper.)

Starting at the Ohio River's source near Pittsburgh, the authors travel downstream to recount the story of the valley, intermingling practical information on important tourist highlights with history, lore, and the personal observations of lifelong residents. This is the only modern guide to this historically and scenically rich area and a welcome addition to any travel library.

Swedes in Wisconsin, by Frederick Hale. (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1983. pp. 32, illustrations, bibliography, \$2.00 paper.) and *Welsh in Wisconsin*, by Phillips G. Davies. (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1983. pp. 39, illustrations, bibliography, \$2.00 paper.)

These are the two most recent booklets in an ethnic series published by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Davies teaches at Iowa State University in the English Department and Hale holds a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University. Both writers have provided a very succinct and most informative book for students of ethnic history and those interested in Wisconsin history. Well worth the price!

The Shampoo King: F. W. Fitch and His Company, by Denny Rehder. (Des Moines: Waukon & Mississippi Press, 1981. pp. 161, illustrations, appendixes, sources, \$12.95 paper.)

An excellent business history of a very intriguing Des Moines business firm. The author, associate director of university relations at Drake University and author of four other Iowa-related books, reveals the ups and downs of one of Des Moines's leading families and their involvement in the shampoo industry in the 1920s and through the 1940s. Much of the appeal of the book is the numerous old photographs and early ads for various Fitch products. This is a rare glimpse into a Des Moines lifestyle that was a mystery to many at the time and one which might never be lived again.

—MDG

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